University of Manchester Q-Step Summer Project 2019

Ref: #18 UoMQStep 2019 One Manchester - Paying the Rent on Universal Credit

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Organisation Name: One Manchester

Team/Department: Income Recovery Team and Business Excellence & Efficiency Team

Address: Lovell House, Archway 6, Hulme, Manchester, M15 5RN

Provisional title for project: Paying the Rent on Universal Credit

One Manchester is a housing association managing c.12,000 homes. An increasing number of our tenants are being moved onto the Universal Credit (UC) system which is being phased in by government to replace the existing benefits system. We have developed a series of interventions to ensure those customers on UC make rent payments to us. We also have interventions in place to manage the rent payments of those tenants not on UC. The aim of this project is to use data to compare the effectiveness of UC interventions versus that of non-UC interventions. So one part of the analysis will be comparing UC and non-UL claimant repayment records (and recovery actions such as letters, visits and phone calls) through appropriate statistical methods. This will enable us to identify areas for improvement. In addition there is scope for qualitative analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of the interventions. The primary sources of data will be two Income Recovery Reports which include information on payment activity across our customer base and our internal housing management systems.

Key words (up to 12):

Universal Credit; benefits; process review; process improvement; customers.

Essential and desirable skills that the student would need to have:

Essential: Microsoft Office (especially Excel); experience of analysing data in Excel or statistical software package; good communication skills; good attention to detail; good time management; adaptability (to workload / environment); discretion; motivation.

Desirable: Determined and resilient; confident in decision making; familiar with effectiveness evaluations; familiarity with a statistics package; willing to test different statistical approaches to modelling the data.

Where the work would be carried out: The successful candidate would be based at our Lovell House head office in Hulme for the duration of the placement.

Preferred selection method (interview or other method): Interview (informal face to face)

Interview preference (on campus, remote, in your office): On campus (as per previous 2 years, has worked well)

Support and training offered by the organisation: On the job support from the Income Recovery Team and Business Excellence Team plus company induction for work placements.

Any issues of data confidentiality and/or IPR that would need to be resolved:

There will be exposure to some confidential tenant information and sensitive internal company information so discretion and certain behaviours will be required (a data protection course forms part of the company induction).

Supporting information:

One Manchester's Income Recovery Team manages the payment of rent and rent arrears by all its current tenants as well as money owed by former tenants. Rent is the main source of income for any housing association and robust procedures must be in place to ensure collection rates remain high.

One Manchester's Business Excellence and Efficiency Team serves as the organisation's business improvement function, managing key projects, delivering process improvements and ensuring the customer experience is at the forefront of people's minds when providing services daily.

Financial assistance offered by the organisation:

Any possible transportation costs within work time will be covered.